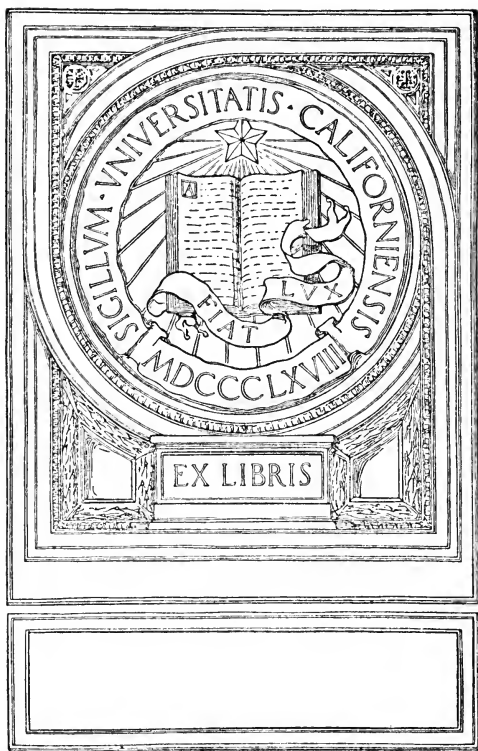


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most humble and  
most obedient sonne  
and servant

Charles R



For my Lord German

he <sup>may</sup> enjoy all his rights. S

For the Earle of  
S<sup>t</sup> Albans.

God keepe you. S



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FIVE LETTERS OF KING CHARLES II.

COMMUNICATED TO

THE CAMDEN MISCELLANY,

BY

THE MOST HONOURABLE THE MARQUIS OF BRISTOL,  
PRESIDENT OF THE CAMDEN SOCIETY.

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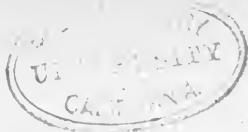
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## FIVE LETTERS OF KING CHARLES II.

COMMUNICATED BY

### THE MARQUIS OF BRISTOL.

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THE following valuable letters of King Charles II. are printed, from original holographs, all in the possession of the Marquis of Bristol, President of the Camden Society.

All of them were written during the residence of the exiled sovereign in Flanders, in the period between the death of his father and the Restoration. One letter, to which we have given precedence, was addressed to the King's mother, the dowager Queen Henrietta Maria; the other four were written to the well-known Henry Jermyn, the chief officer of the Queen's household, and her principal adviser. The first three of the letters to Jermyn are addressed to him by his title of Lord Jermyn, conferred upon him by Charles I. on the 8th of September, 1643; the last by that of Earl of St. Alban's, an advance in the peerage which was granted to him by Charles II. on the eve of the Restoration. The date of this earldom is usually assigned to the 27th April, 1660,<sup>a</sup> but its recognition in the letter now referred to is dated the 3rd April, 1660, which was probably

<sup>a</sup> Dugdale states that the letters patent conferring the dignity were dated at "Breda in Brabant, 27 Apr. an. 1660." The Earl of St. Alban's died on 2nd January, 1683-4, without issue. On that event his earldom became extinct, but his barony of "Jermyn of St. Edmundsbury in com. Suffolk" descended to Thomas the eldest son of Thomas the Earl's elder brother, on whose death in 1703 it also became extinct. (Dugdale's Baronage, ii. 469; Collect. Topog. and Genealog. ii. 337; and Lord Alfred Hervey's Paper on the Family of Hervey, p. 89.)

new style, and was consequently equivalent to the 24th March, 1659-1660, according to the style then prevalent in England.

Each of these letters has its special interest. From the first of them it would appear that the royal writer had warned his mother in a previous letter that the Earl of Balcarres, a Scottish nobleman of the highest character for loyalty, and who had been the King's secretary for Scotland, was no longer to be trusted. The Queen had expressed her astonishment at these tidings, had reminded the King of the good character he had given the Earl on his first coming to Paris, and had made inquiry respecting the nature of the evidence upon which the King now discarded his once valued servant. The letter with which we are now dealing is the answer of Charles II. He assures the Queen that he has unquestionable proofs against Lord Balcarres of double dealing and dishonesty, proofs under his own hand, which the King promises to send the Queen "as soon as he comes where the papers are."

This letter, it will be perceived, is valuable but tantalising; valuable as showing the King's belief that he did not act towards a highly important and respectable nobleman rashly, upon mere prejudice or hearsay, but upon evidence which he deemed sufficient, and the sufficiency of which he was willing to allow the Queen to test,—but still most tantalising, as it does not in itself give information which will enable any one to clear up the doubts which hang over this transaction.

Lord Balcarres was the leader of that Presbyterian party in Scotland which was opposed to the Earl of Argyle and all those who were inclined to act with Cromwell and the English Independents. In that character, and out of mere loyalty, Lord Balcarres and his admirable wife sacrificed every thing for King Charles. Ultimately, almost as pennyless fugitives, they made their way to the continent,

and shared the exile of their sovereign. But, among the feuds which divided Charles's mimic court, there was one between Lord Balcarres and Hyde the Lord Chancellor and historian. There were strong prejudices, national and personal, and above all religious prejudices, on both sides. Balcarres was a Scot and a Presbyterian—quite sufficient reasons for dislike on the one side—Hyde was a High Churchman, in which one quality was concentrated the essence of almost all evil in the judgment of the other. A struggle ensued. Balcarres was incautious, Hyde cunning, and the weakest went to the wall. The story, so far as the facts are at present known, may be read in Lord Lindsay's very interesting *Lives of the Lindsays* (ii. 100—112). It will there be seen, not indeed that the accusations against Lord Balcarres were unfounded, but that he was a very pious and amiable man.

Considerable difficulty has been found in positively assigning the letter which relates to this subject to any specific year. Whilst living at Bruges, and also whilst at Brussels, Charles went over on several occasions to Antwerp for a few days, and this letter was probably written during one of those visits. Charles was at Antwerp on the 28th July, 1658 (*Thurloe's State Papers*, vii. 280), but two letters in the *Clarendon State Papers*, (iii. 365, 369), from the King to the Princess Royal, in reference to the disgrace of Lord Balcarres, seem rather to point to the year preceding.

## I.

KING CHARLES II. TO QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA.

Antwerp, 26 July [1657?].

MADAME,

I hope your Majestie hath that good opinion of me, as to beleeeue

that your commandes carries euer so much waight with me, that at any time when I doe not comply with them, your Majestie may conclude the inconveniences on my parte are so greate, as I am confident you would be troubled if I should obay you, and the truth is, this businesse of my Lord Balcarres is of that nature; for your Majestie may be confident, that, after haueing giuen him so good a carrecter as I did at his first comming to Paris, I would not call my iudgement so farre in question, or run the venture of being thought apte to change my opinion of men vpon light groundes, if I had not those proofes against him of duple dealing and dishonesty as would iustifie me to all the world, though I had proceeded against him with a much seuerer sentence then hetherto I haue declared; and, because your Majestie shall not take my single worde for it, I will sende you, as soone as I come where the papers are, the proofes of what I say vnder his owne hande, which, if your Majestie will consider with an indifferent eye, you will at least conclude him not very fitt to put obligations vpon; and, for the promise your Majestie and my sister are ingaged in, can be of no waite in this particular, for certainly at the same time the person misbehaues him selfe he forfeits also the engagement, and I am confident your Majestie thinkes whosoever is faulty to me is so to you; I am sure it shall euer be so on my parte towards your Majestie. I should say much more to your Majestie but that I deferre it till I can sende you the papers I mention, and will only now assure your Majestie that I am and ever will be, Madame,

Your Majesties most humble and most obedient sone and seruant,

CHARLES R<sup>a</sup>.

[Neither addressed nor sealed.]

The next letter is addressed to Lord Jermyn. It relates in great part to a matter of account of little interest. But, after that has been discussed, we find a few sentences respecting another matter of some moment. Charles having now removed into

<sup>a</sup> The conclusion and signature of this letter are represented in the prefixed fac-simile.

the territories of Spain, which country was at war with England under Cromwell, an arrangement or treaty was made between the exiled sovereign and the King of Spain, whereby the latter agreed to make him an annual payment of 6,000 guilders, with half as much more for his brother the Duke of Gloucester. We find in this letter that the treaty with Spain was fully ratified, and that the King was about to send in a few days to Brussels, in the hope of receiving "fruit." In the mean time he urges Lord Jermyn to press for payment of an arrear of six months due on the French pension of 6,000 livres per month, which the King had received from the time of his arrival in Paris, after the battle of Worcester.

The result will appear in the letter which will follow the present.

## II.

### KING CHARLES II. TO LORD JERMYN.

Bruges, 21 July [1656?].

I haue three of yours vpon my handes, one of the 7, an other of the 14, of this month, and that of the 24 of the last which Tom Talbott <sup>a</sup> brought me yesterday. I must tell you there is a mistake

<sup>a</sup> Tom Talbot, one of five celebrated brothers who frequented the court of Charles II., is thus described by Clarendon: "The fourth brother was a Franciscan friar, of wit enough, but of so notorious debauchery that he was frequently under severe discipline by the superiors of his order for his scandalous life, which made him hate his habit, and take all opportunities to make journeys into England and Ireland; but, not being able to live there, he was forced to return and put on his abhorred habit, which he always called his 'fool's coat,' and came seldom into those places where he was known, and so wandered into Germany and Flanders, and took all opportunities to be in the place where the King was; and so he came to Cologne and Brussels and Bruges, and, being a merry fellow, was the more made of for laughing at and contemning his brother the Jesuit, who had not so good natural parts, though by his education he had more sobriety and lived without scandal in his manners. He went by the name of Tom Talbot, and after the King's return was in London in his man's clothes (as he called them), with the

in your bill for the 350 pistols, for Tom Blagge<sup>a</sup> shewes me your letter wherein you tell him you haue returned him 200 crowns, for which he is to receaue 465 gilders out of my bill, whereas I am informed by the marchant whome I haue imployd to receaue the mony for me, that there is but 21 poundes Flemish (which amounts but to 120 gilders and some odd shillings) more then is due to me vpon the exchange for the 250 pistols, therfore you must returne to him what is due ouer and aboue that summe. I hope you haue before this time receaued an order for the six monthes that are due, which I pray returne with all possible speede to me, for I want it very much, though the ratification be come to me from Spayne as fully as I could expect, of which I hope to receaue frute very shortly, to which purpose I intende to send to Brusselles within few dayes; there greate worke of Valancienes being as you know well ouer, I shall be very glade that a treaty betweene the two crownes may follow. Now, concerning what you write to me by Tom Talbot, I am of your opinion that I must be advised by these ministers heere in the conducting that businesse, there credit and authority being likly to be of most vse to me in that place. I haue seald the Earle of Inchequin's pattent,<sup>b</sup> which I had signed so

natural licence of an Irish friar (which are a people, for the most part, of the whole creation the most sottish and the most brutal), and against his obedience, and all orders of his superiors, who interdicted him to say mass." (*Life of Clarendon*, p. 1193, ed. 1843.)

<sup>a</sup> Colonel Thomas Blagge, a gentleman of an ancient Suffolk family, groom of the Bed-chamber to Charles I. and II., and a family connexion of Lord Jermyn. During the Civil War he was governor of Wallingford Castle, and, after the Restoration, Captain of Landguard Fort. He died on the 14th November, 1660, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. A pedigree of the family of Blagge is published in Gage's *History of Thingoe*, p. 520, and more fully, as shewing its relationship to the Jermyns and the Godolphins, in Evelyn's *Life of Mr. Godolphin* (ed. Bishop of Oxford), p. 254.

<sup>b</sup> It is ordinarily stated that Murrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, was created by Charles II. Lord O'Brien and Earl of Inchiquin in the year 1654. This may have been the date of the sign manual here alluded to. Other facts mentioned in this letter show that it was written, and that consequently the Earl of Inchiquin's patent of his earldom was sealed, in 1658.



longe since, therefore I pray lett notice be taken of it that he may enjoy all his rights.<sup>a</sup>

[*Postscript.*] I would haue you pay to Sr R. Foster<sup>b</sup> 200 liuers out of the first mony you receaue for me.<sup>c</sup>

[Addressed].—For my Lord Jermin.

[Seal.]—A small lozenge-shaped seal, bearing the royal arms (1 and 4. France and England quarterly; 2. Scotland; 3. Ireland.) surmounted by the crown, and with the initials C. R., one letter on each side of the shield. See photographed fac-simile in the plate prefixed, No. 2.

It appears from the third letter that on Lord Jermyn's application to Cardinal Mazarin for the amount due to Charles on his French pension, as directed in the last letter, he was informed, that, in consequence of the English sovereign's new arrangement with Spain, the pension alluded to would no longer be paid. Charles writes in reply, it will be seen, in considerable indignation. The account of the matter given by Lord Clarendon is as follows;—  
 "As soon as the treaty [with Spain] was confirmed, in truth from the time that his Majesty came into Flanders, and that he resolved to make as entire a conjunction with the Spaniards as they would permit, he gave notice to the King of France that he would no longer receive that pension, which during the time he had remained at Cologne had been reasonably well paid, but after his coming into Flanders he never would receive any part of it." (Hist. Rebell. book xv.) Charles's own statement is contained in the following letter.

<sup>a</sup> Signed with Charles II.'s knot, a fac-simile of which (with the address and conclusion of the letter) is given in the plate prefixed.

<sup>b</sup> Sir Richard Foster had been keeper of the King's privy purse.

<sup>c</sup> Signed in the same manner as the body of this letter mentioned in the preceding note marked *a*.

## III.

## KING CHARLES II. TO LORD JERMYN.

Bruges, 20 October [1656 ?].

I haue receaued yours of the 13, and am so farre from being vn-satisfied with the Cardinall's retrenching my pention, that I am sure I haue told you before, if he had inclined to haue continued it, I would absolutly haue refused it. I pray therfore sende me worde to what time they haue pay'd it, and so how much I haue receaued from them, as likewise how much is in truth in arreare to that time, that I may be able as well to say how much they haue failed of making good what they promised, as to acknowledge what I haue receaued. You say the Cardinall preserues one equality towards me, that is, if here be any thing attempted vpon England, he shall complayne of nothing that is done; and yett, whilst he hath much more reason to beleue that will be the case then the contrary, he complayns more then would become him whateuer the case shall be, and in all compaynes talkes of establishing Cromwell, and vses other expressions then I expected from his discretion, when I gaue ouer expecting any thing from his kindenesse. I wish you should tell him, that a man who hath thought a necessity of his owne making warrant enough for such proceedings against me as no necessity could in truth excuse, should allowe a reall visible necessity, which he cannot but decerne, a good iustification of my doeing what all the world would laugh at me if I should not do; and you shall do well to put him in minde that I am not yett so low, but that I may returne both the courtisyes and the iniuries I haue receaued.<sup>a</sup>

[Addressed]—For my Lord Jermin.

[Seal.] The same lozenge-shaped seal used in sealing No. II.

The next letter relates to a subject which was one of dispute and annoyance among the Protestant members of Queen Hen-

<sup>a</sup> Signed with the Charles II.'s knot mentioned in the note to the preceding letter.

rietta Maria's household and other English exiles living in Paris. When the Queen first took refuge in France, Charles I. appointed Dr. John Cosin, Dean of Peterborough, and subsequently Bishop of Durham, to attend upon her as a kind of Protestant chaplain. Cosin assumed the spiritual charge of the numerous Protestant members of the Queen's household, and had an under-room in the Louvre assigned to him by the French government, to be used as a chapel for the performance of religious services according to the rites of the Church of England. After the death of Charles I. and the establishment of the Republic in England, the influence of Walter Montague, a son of the first Earl of Manchester, and a zealous convert to Catholicism, procured the withdrawal of the permission to perform worship in the under-room, on the ground that the French King could not permit the exercise of any other religion in one of his own houses than the Roman Catholic. At the same time Queen Henrietta Maria gave Dr. Cosin notice that she was no longer able to continue the payment that had been formerly assigned to him as a member of her household.

The Protestants appealed to Hyde, who was then Chancellor of Charles II.'s empty Exchequer, to intercede for the restoration of their liberty of worship. He represented to the Queen the ill effect which the withdrawal of these Protestant privileges must necessarily produce in England, especially in the feelings of the people of that country towards herself. She heard him with favour, but referred him to Walter Montague; telling him, moreover, that the Queen Regent of France had blamed her for want of zeal for her religion, and for not caring to advance it, or to convert any of her children. Hyde found Montague impervious to all reason. He denied that it was of any importance to the affairs of Charles II.

to regard the feelings of the members of the Church of England, and even asserted that it was the universal opinion that the members of that body could never do the King any service, but that all his hopes of restoration should be built upon the Roman Catholics and the Presbyterians.

Queen Henrietta Maria was convinced by Hyde and not by Montague. She restored Dr. Cosin to his position as one of her household, and allotted him a private room in the apartments assigned to her, wherein the Protestant services might be continued. These incidents occurred, according to Clarendon, from whom we have derived the particulars (*History of the Rebellion*, lib. xiii. and *Life*, part vi.), in the year 1650. This new arrangement lasted for some years; but it appears from the following letter, that, after Charles II. removed into the dominions of Spain, Henrietta Maria again withdrew Dr. Cosins's permission to celebrate Protestant worship. It seems from the following letter, addressed to Lord Jermyn, that Charles wrote to his mother on the subject, urging probably the same arguments which had on the previous occasion been addressed to her by Hyde. It is to Henrietta Maria's credit, that, although from time to time persuaded by the bigoted people about her to do many things, with a view to proselytism, which politically were extremely foolish, she had herself the good sense to regret the loss of her old confessor Father Phillips, who she said was a prudent and discreet man, and would never suffer her to be pressed to any passionate undertakings, under pretence of doing good for Catholics; he always told her, "that, as she ought to continue firm and constant to her own religion, so she was to live well towards the Protestants, who deserved well from her, and to whom she was beholden." (*Hist. Rebell.* lib. xiii.)

## IV.

## KING CHARLES II. TO LORD JERMYN.

Brusselles, 2 August [1657?].

I was very sorry to heare that the Queene had forbidden Dr. Cosins the exercise of our religion, as he was wont to do; you will see what I have written to her vpon the matter, and I do con-iure you to vse your vtmost endeauors that her Majestie would withdraw her commandes, and permitt the deane to officiat as he hath done formerly, for otherwise it will produce those incon-ueniences which are so visible as I thinke I neede not put you in minde of them.<sup>a</sup>

[Addressed].—For my Lord Jermin.

[Seal].—The small lozenge-shaped seal mentioned before.

The next and final letter (No. V.) indicates a totally different state of things from the preceding. In them we have seen the doubts, mistrusts, and bickerings, inseparable from the court of an exiled sovereign. In the one now presented the scene is entirely changed. The great man, during whose government the restoration of the family of Stuart was impossible, had gone to his rest; his son had retired into a position suited to his pusillanimity; the old Long Parliament which had been restored was about to dissolve itself; writs were to be issued to call a new parliament, which was to meet on the 25th April, 1660. Popular feeling in favour of the restoration had begun to make itself apparent, and the hopes of all Royalists were rising higher day by day. Such was the state of things in England. Charles II. and those about him were in a fever of excitement and expectation. He was still at Brussels; but his friends had begun to think, that, in expectation of a treaty between him and the English authorities, to settle the conditions of his resto-

<sup>a</sup> Signed with the Charles II.'s knot mentioned before.

ration, access to his mother might be convenient, besides that it would be far from agreeable to English negotiators to seek their King in Spanish territories. With these views we find that he and Lord Jermyn, now Earl of St. Alban's, were planning for his removal to Paris, and living day by day in expectation of what the post from England would bring. A Protestant wind, as it was termed in a later crisis of the history of this royal family, delayed the ordinary arrivals, and in the mean time rumours were afloat which greatly increased the natural anxiety of the expectant sovereign. It was under these circumstances that the following letter was written. On the meeting of the new Parliament events moved towards what had become their obvious end with increased celerity. On the  $\frac{4}{14}$  May, at the suggestion of General Monk, Charles removed hastily out of the Spanish territories, and, at the same suggestion, addressed those letters to England dated from Breda, which were immediately followed by his triumphant restoration.

## V.

## KING CHARLES II. TO THE EARL OF ST. ALBAN'S.

Brusselles, 3 April, 1660.

I haue little to say to you, the post being not yett arriued from England, which comes very vnseasonably, for we did expect by these letters some thing of consequence, and the winde continues so full east, as no ships can stirre from thence. There is reports heere that come from Calais as if they should haue past a vote in the house for king, lords, and commons, the truth of which you know by this time.<sup>a</sup> Pray hasten all you can my comming to you; for,

<sup>a</sup> A letter of Lord Clarendon, dated the 10th of April, 1660, which, like the one above, was n.s., affords an apt explanation of these Calais reports: "The Parliament was, as you have heard, to be dissolved upon Thursday the 15th of the last month, but there had been

besides the passion I haue to wayte on the Queene, I thinke it the properest place for my publike concernes. There is a gunn which I bespoke of the Turennes; if it be finished pray send it to me, and I [will] returne you what it costs. God keepe you.<sup>a</sup>

[Addressed]—For the Earle of St. Alban's.

[Seal.]—The small lozenge-shaped seal before mentioned.

[Indorsed]—The King. April.

Several of these letters are attested, in lieu of a signature, by a mark, which we have taken upon ourselves to designate as Charles the Second's knot, from the general resemblance it bears to the various heraldic charges which are termed knots. The three letters addressed to Lord Jermyn are all authenticated by this mark, which is very accurately represented in No. 2 of the prefixed page of fac-

so many artifices used by the Republican party to stay the business of the militia, and afterwards to stop and corrupt it at the press, that the House resolved to sit again the next day, and then about seven o'clock at night they dissolved, to the universal joy of all the kingdom, the Republican party only excepted, who had no mind to cashier themselves of a power they were like again never to be possessed of; the people not being like to choose many of them to serve in the next Parliament. Before they dissolved they declared the engagement, by which men were bound to submit to the government without King or House of Lords, to be void and null, and to be taken off the file of all records, wherever it was entered; and this might be the ground of that report at Calais, that they had voted the government to be by King, Lords, and Commons; besides, there was a pretty accident that might contribute thereunto, for the day before the Parliament dissolved, at full Exchange, there came a fellow with a ladder upon his shoulders, and a pot of paint in his hand, and set the ladder in the place where the last King's statue had stood, and then went up and wiped out that inscription which had been made after the death of the King, *Exit Tyrannus, &c.*, and as soon as he had done it threw up his cap, and cried "God bless King Charles the Second!" in which the whole Exchange joined with the greatest shout you can imagine, and immediately caused a huge bonfire to be made, which the neighbours of Cornhill and Cheapside imitated with three or four more; and so that action passed, nor do I find there was any order for it." (Clarendon Papers, iii. 725.)

<sup>a</sup> Signed with a variety of the Charles II's knot, represented, with the conclusion of his letter, in the fac-simile No. 4.

similes.<sup>a</sup> The last letter, addressed to the Earl of St. Alban's, is attested by a variation of this knot which is represented in No. 3 of the fac-similes.

Private letters of Charles II. are so uncommon that there are few examples with which those now published may be compared. In the Collection of Royal Letters edited by Sir George Bromley (8vo. Lond. 1788), there occur three;—one signed with the initials C. R., one unsigned, and the third authenticated by what appears, from the engraved fac-simile prefixed to that work, to be a variety of the same knot used in the letters now published. This example of the knot has been interpreted by the Editor of Sir George Bromley's volume to mean J. L., which signature he has accordingly appended to the letter in question (Bromley's Royal Letters, p. 284).

Of the seal by which four of these letters were closed, and which is described at p. 9, there is only to remark that it is so strikingly similar to one used by Charles I. that it can scarcely be distinguished from it. Examples of the similar seal of Charles I. may be seen in Harleian MS. 6988, folios 135 and 194. On a very minute comparison, slight differences will be found between the two impressions, *ex. gr.* in that of Charles II. the crown which surmounts the shield is raised a trifle higher above the shield, and the C., on the dexter side of the shield, is closer to the shield, than in the similar seal of Charles I.; probably the seal of Charles II. was engraved from an impression of his father's seal, or the latter was originally engraved in duplicate.

<sup>a</sup> It would be unjust not to mention that this most accurate and excellent plate of combined photography and lithography, for which the Society is indebted to the Marquis of Bristol, is the work of Mr. G. I. F. Tupper.









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